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Michael K. Mutter
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, L.L.P.
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747

Dear Mr. Mutter:

This is in response to your letter received 25 August 2006 inquiring about the status of U.S. patent application 10/574,692 filed 05 April 2006. The application will be processed by the U.S. Designated/Elected Office and applicant will receive an Office action in due course in a few more months. Please be notified that the Office is experiencing a delay in processing National Phase applications. All further inquiries about the status of this application may be addressed to Catherine Short, Manager of the U.S. Designated/Elected Office at (703) 308-9140, extension 220 or to Terry Vessels, Supervisor of Team I, at telephone number (703) 308-9140, extension 221.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nguyễn Ngọc-Hô", written over a horizontal line.

Nguyễn Ngọc-Hô
Paralegal Specialist
PCT Legal Office

Tel: (571) 272-3290